Guidance Document for CAP FR-304, Application for ANSI Accreditation Under ASTM E-2659-18
Note: This version of the document is for the initial application only, suitable for external use

<u>Document Conventions</u>

• Column 1 quotes the E2659-18 standard. Highlighted sections in yellow are new or revised requirements under the 2018 version of the standard.

• Column 2, where used, clarifies the requirement and refers to definitions included in Section 3 of the standard

• Column 3: **Required** items in this column are quoted from the CAP FR-304 application indicating what, at minimum, must be submitted with the application. Example evidence noted below these statements aids in clarification of these items and indicates the typical documentation assessors seek to determine whether the requirement is met; however, it is not all-inclusive. Assessors may request additional documentation as indicated by individual application documents.
<u>Note</u>: in cases where there are specific items listed under a requirement, e.g. policy names, required elements, etc., the required and sample evidence is listed only in the "stem" portion of column 3. As an example, see 5.2.1.3.

• Column 4 refers to evidence typically collected during the onsite visit. Generally, assessors seek triangulation – at least three sources of evidence – to establish that a requirement is met. Such evidence onsite includes interviews, records, and demonstrations of systems, equipment, and processes. The information provided may apply to multiple related requirements; however, for the sake of brevity, repetition is kept to a minimum. The evidence listed in this document is not all-inclusive; assessors may ask for additional evidence and/or interviews or demonstrations.

<u>Acronyms used</u>

CE – Continuing Education
CI – Certificate Issuer
CPIDP – Certificate Program Instructional Design Plan
P&Ps – Policies and Procedures
SME – Subject-matter expert

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
5. Requirements for Certificate Issuers			
5.1 Organizational Structure and Administration—The certificate issuer shall be structured and administered in such a way that confidence is given to stakeholders of its authority and qualifications to issue the certificate.	Certificate issuer (3.1.7); stakeholder (3.1.31)	Policies and procedures, organizational chart, Advisory Group rosters/bios, meeting minutes/ notes, names of any business partners/affiliates	Interview organization executives and program managers
5.1.1 The certificate issuer shall be, or reside within, a legal business entity or governmental agency.		**Required:** bylaws, articles of incorporation/authorizing legislation, etc. documenting legal-entity status	
5.1.2 The certificate issuer shall be an appropriate and qualified issuer of the certificate.		**Required:** statement of organization or unit mission	
5.1.2.1 The certificate program's purpose, scope, and intended outcomes shall be consistent with the stated mission and work of the certificate issuer.	Certificate program (3.1.8); certificate program scope (3.1.13); intended learning outcomes (3.1.24).	**Required:** statement of how the program aligns with stated mission	
5.1.3 The certificate issuer shall have a clearly designated authority charged to administer the certificate program and ensure compliance with the provisions of this practice.		**Required:** Description & chart of organization's structure; documentation of designated authority	Interview with designated authority
5.1.4 Advisory Group	Certificate program instructional design plan (3.1.9); certificate program management (3.1.10)	CPIDP, policies and procedures, organizational chart, committee rosters/bios, formal meeting minutes/notes	Interview program management & at least 1-2 Advisory Group members about their activities supporting the program in compliance with this section
5.1.4 Advisory Group—The certificate issuer shall create and sustain an advisory group composed of and representing the interests of the certificate program's primary stakeholders.	Advisory Group (3.1.2) Primary stakeholder (3.1.28) Stakeholder (3.1.31)	Ensure all identified primary stakeholder groups are represented; identify which person represents which stakeholder group	
5.1.4.1 The advisory group shall advise certificate program management on issues integral to ensuring the certificate is current, relevant, and valuable to its primary stakeholders.	Certificate program management (3.1.10); primary stakeholders (3.1.28); Advisory Group (3.1.2)	**Required:** Description of how and by what means Advisory Group advises program management Identify how CI ensures the program is "current, relevant, and valuable" to primary stakeholders	

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5.1.4.2 The advisory group shall have input into, at minimum, the certificate program (1) target audience, (2) purpose, (3) scope, (4) requisites, (5) term, (6) intended learning outcomes, and (7) instructional design plan.	Target audience consists of those who are stakeholders for whom the certificate program is designed.	**Required:** Most recent meeting summaries / minutes; must include participants, agenda, and reference to the listed items being discussed	
5.1.4.3 The advisory group shall convene to advise certificate program management, at minimum, (1) when the elements of 5.1.4.2 are initially created or when changes are proposed, and (2) when a program evaluation is conducted.	Certificate program evaluation (6.1.10) Advisory Group (3.1.2; 5.1.4) Management Review (5.2.6)	**Required:** Evidence that Program Evaluation & Management Review findings were presented & discussed at an Advisory Group meeting; minutes noting discussion of topics in 5.1.4.2	
==5.2 Management System==—The certificate issuer shall have a management system that is capable of supporting the consistent achievement of the requirements of this standard practice.	A management system is "A formalized system that documents processes, procedures, and responsibilities for achieving quality policies and objectives as it helps to coordinate and direct an organization's activities to meet customer and regulatory requirements and improve its effectiveness and efficiency on a continuous basis." Source: https://asq.org/quality-resources/quality-management-system	See evidence for individual requirements below	
5.2.1 Documentation:			
5.2.1.1 The certificate issuer's certificate program management shall establish and document objectives and policies for its certificate program activities.	Certificate program management (3.1.10)	**Required:** Documented certificate program strategic plans & annual objectives	
5.2.1.2 Policies (and procedures, where applicable) of the certificate program shall be fair and equitable and comply with all applicable regulatory and statutory requirements and legal obligations.		**Required:** List of any applicable laws, regulations, and/or legal obligations to organization or certificate program; documentation that organization is in compliance with them Relevant polices & procedures; evidence of monitoring to ensure compliance	Relevant personnel Interviews with those responsible for compliance, including jurisdictional reviews where applicable; review of any records not provided during initial document review

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5.2.1.3 There shall be written policies outlined to address, at a minimum, the following:	Policies for 5.2.1.3 (1) through (17) must be documented; although the standard notes here only policies, it is generally accepted there will be procedures accompanying them which are addressed in other areas of the standard	**Required:** Written policies present for items 1-17 This requirement covers only that the policies are present; their compliance with the standard is covered under other requirements.	
(1) Advisory group composition and responsibilities;	Advisory Group (3.1.2; 5.1.4)		
(2) Certificate program design plan;	Certificate program instructional design plan (3.1.9; 6.1.1; 6.1.2)		
(3) Certificate issuance and use;	Certificate (3.1.5); certificate holder (3.1.6); certificate issuer (3.1.7); certificate term (3.1.14; 6.1.4)		
(4) Invalidating a certificate;	See (3) above		
(5) Complaints;	Complaint (3.1.15; 5.8)		
(6) Appeals;	Appeal (3.1.3; 5.9)		
(7) Privacy, confidentiality, and security;	Confidentiality (3.1.16 Privacy (3.1.29)		
(8) Program commercial support and disclosure;	Outsourcing & commercial support (5.6)		
(9) Fees, cancellation, and refunds;			
(10) Nondiscrimination;	Includes ADA (where applicable)		
(11) Personnel;	Personnel (5.3)		
(12) Outsourcing;	Outsourcing & commercial support (5.6)		
(13) Records control;	Records control (3.1.30; 5.2.3)		
(14) Document control;	Document control (3.1.22; 5.2.2)		
(15) Internal audit;	Internal audit (3.1.25; 5.2.4)		
(16) Management review; and	Management review (5.2.6)		
(17) Corrective and preventive action.	Corrective and preventive action (5.2.5)		

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5.2.2.1 The certificate issuer shall have a process for document control that addresses the proper control of document creation, approval, revision and reapproval, distribution, and prevention of obsolete document use.	Document control (3.1.22) Document examples to which this applies include (and is not limited to): policies & procedures, test forms, participant guides, eLearning courseware, registration forms, organization chart, job descriptions, vendor contracts	**Required:** Written policies and procedures that address listed items Evidence of implementation of each item, e.g. version numbers on controlled documents, computer folders/files, etc.	Document sampling; review of current controlled documents; demonstration of controlled document access Interview(s) with personnel responsible for these activities
5.2.3 Records Control:			
5.2.3.1 The certificate issuer shall have a process for records control that addresses which records are kept, by whom, for how long, and how they are disposed.	Records control (3.1.30; 5.7 Document examples to which this applies include (and is not limited to): Advisory Group and Management Review minutes, internal audit reports, program evaluation reports, list of certificate holders, test results, survey results	**Required:** Written policies and procedures that address listed items Evidence of implementation of each item	Relevant interviews with those responsible for records control; record sampling; review of procedures as implemented; demonstration of records controls
5.2.3.2 Records of certificates issued shall be maintained for a period of time beyond the term identified on the certificates to allow stakeholders reasonable access to such records.	Certificate term (3.1.14)	**Required:** Evidence of the period of time that certificate records are maintained, e.g. policies & procedures	Relevant interviews with those responsible for records control; record sampling; view disposal method/archive
5.2.3.3 If applicable, records of academic or continuing education credits granted shall be maintained consistently with the provisions specified by the agency administering the credit and any applicable national standards.	Academic or continuing education credits (5.7.1; 6.1.9) Credit (6.1.9)	**Required, if applicable:** Written policies and procedures Evidence of current authorization by administering agency to offer CE credit; compliance with that agency's requirements; who is responsible for tracking/reporting CE credits (e.g. CI or learner)	Relevant interviews with those responsible for records control; record sampling, seeking evidence that P&Ps are being followed

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5.2.4 Internal Audit:			
5.2.4.1 The internal audits shall be planned and conducted on a regular basis.	Internal audit (3.1.25) must be conducted for all certificate program policies & procedures at least annually. Audits may be conducted internally or externally; however, not by any personnel having direct program responsibilities. In small organizations, conduct of the audit may be shared; i.e. the auditor may conduct audit(s) of any areas for which s/he is not directly responsible	**Required:** policies/procedures specifying the frequency of audits Policies/procedures specifying when and how internal audits are conducted, and by whom; most recent audit report(s) (within past 12 months) signed and dated by auditor and demonstrating compliance with P&Ps and this standard; if conducted by external auditor, ensure compliance with 5.6.1 through 5.6.1.3	Interview(s) with individual(s) who conducted the most recent audit and wrote the report
5.2.4.2 The results of the audits shall be documented and communicated to certificate program management.	Certificate program management (3.1.10)	**Required:** documentation of communications to program management regarding the most recent internal audit Most recent audit report(s); evidence demonstrating results of the audit were communicated to program management, such as minutes of reporting meeting between auditor and program management, email chain if electronically provided, other evidence, e.g. auditor & management sign-offs on report	Interview(s) with individual(s) who conducted the audit and wrote the report.
5.2.5 Corrective and Preventive Action:	This section requires a process that covers all certificate program activities		
5.2.5.1 The certificate issuer shall have a process for identifying current or potential issues in its certificate program activities and for managing corrective and preventive actions.		**Required:** Documented process for identifying current or potential issues Policies & procedures specifying how issues are identified and how corrective/preventive actions are established and managed, such as steps, plans, etc.	Interview(s) with auditor(s) regarding recommended corrective/preventive actions; interview(s) with program management regarding the process

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5.2.5.2 The certificate issuer shall identify the causes of issues/potential issues and plan for their correction/prevention.		**Required:** Documentation of the certificate program's most recent corrective/preventive action plan If the process identifies issues/potential issues, documented action plan for addressing them that includes by-issue cause(s), action(s), completion timeline(s), and who is responsible for each. For action(s) completed, relevant documentation demonstrating compliance	Interview(s) with program management regarding the causes and plan for correction and/or prevention; relevant updates regarding completed action(s)
5.2.5.3 Certificate program management shall approve and appropriate personnel shall implement corrective and preventive actions.		**Required:** Evidence of the process by which corrective and preventive actions are approved and implemented Policies & procedures regarding how management approval is obtained and how personnel are assigned to and implement corrective/ preventive action(s); evidence that this has taken place according to P&Ps	Interview(s) with program management and implementation personnel; view relevant action(s) taken regarding onsite issues (e.g. systems)
<mark>5.2.5.4 The certificate issuer shall track corrective and preventive action progress and issue resolution.</mark>		**Required:** Evidence of the implementation of proposed corrective/preventive actions Policies & procedures regarding how tracking of corrective/progress and issue resolution is conducted; evidence that tracking is taking place (e.g. paper/electronic forms, tracking system or log); evidence of resolution of issues	Interview personnel responsible for tracking/implementing corrective/preventive action; if used, view computer-based tracking system(s) and relevant evidence of tracking and resolution of most recent issues.

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5.2.6 Management Review:			
5.2.6.1 The certificate issuer shall have a process for its certificate program management to review the management system to ensure continued suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness.	Certificate program management (3.1.10) A management system is "A formalized system that documents processes, procedures, and responsibilities for achieving quality policies and objectives as it helps to coordinate and direct an organization's activities to meet customer and regulatory requirements and improve its effectiveness and efficiency on a continuous basis." Source: https://asq.org/quality-resources/quality-management-system	**Required:** Written policies & procedures for conducting management system reviews Policies & procedures that outline a process for certificate program management to review the management system, including who will be involved, what will be reviewed, when the review will take place, etc. Documentation must include how "suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness" of the system is assured.	Interview(s) with program management regarding the process used for management review to triangulate P&Ps
5.2.6.2 These reviews shall be planned and conducted on a regular basis.	A management review must be conducted at least annually.	**Required:** Documentation of the certificate program's most recent management review Policies & procedures demonstrating frequency of management reviews; report and/or meeting minutes demonstrating a review has been conducted within the past 12 months	Interview(s) with program management, looking for demonstrated understanding of E2659's management review requirements and the CI's own policy
5.2.6.3 The input to the management review shall include, at minimum:	Items 1-8 are the minimum required items that must be included as management review inputs; additional inputs may be included as determined by program management This row describes the evidence demonstrating compliance with this requirement	**Required:** Most recent management review meeting agenda showing discussion of results of: internal audits, external audits (if applicable), status of corrective/preventive actions, contractor monitoring, program evaluation(s), complaints received, appeals received, follow-up actions from prior management reviews Documentation showing the 8 items below are discussed as part of the management review	Interview with program management / looking for demonstrated understanding of inputs required and sufficient consideration of each for the time period considered Demonstration(s) of any electronic/online systems used to manage/track results of the listed activities

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(1) Results of internal audits;	Internal audit (5.2.4)		
(2) Results of external audits, if available;			
(3) Status of corrective or preventive actions;	Corrective and Preventive Action (5.2.5)		
(4) Results of contractor performance monitoring;	Outsourcing and Commercial Support (5.6)		
(5) Results of program evaluation(s);	Program Evaluation (6.1.10)		
(6) Complaints received;	Complaints (5.8)		
(7) Appeals received; and	Appeals (5.9)		
(8) Follow-up actions from previous management reviews.			
5.2.6.4 The output of the management review shall include, at minimum, decisions and, if applicable, actions related to the following:	All of these outputs must be considered by management, including whether or not it is determined if change(s) is needed, and presented in the management review report/minutes/formal communications of findings. A variety of "output" formats are possible. The standard does not specify format requirements.	**Required:** Most recent management review meeting minutes showing decisions made and actions related to items 1-8 in the first column Management review output; e.g. a report and/or minutes of review meetings demonstrating consideration of each of the 8 items; correlation between results of the various reports (audit, evaluation, complaints/appeals, etc.) and the review of the "outcome." Report and/or meeting minutes include recommendations that follow logically from evidence considered; action plans, actual changes in policy, procedures or other activities resulting from audit recommendations	Interview with management / looking for demonstrated understanding of outputs required and sufficient consideration of such for the time period considered Evidence that actions determined to be necessary are/have been undertaken
(1) Improvement of the management system;			
(2) Improvement of the certificate program activities; and			
(3) Resource needs.			

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5.3 Personnel:			
5.3.1 Personnel shall be assigned to implement the certificate program policies (and procedures, where applicable).	The individuals assigned responsibility may have other responsibilities beyond the certificate program.	**Required:** Identification of personnel assigned to implement certificate program policies & procedures Policies and procedures, job descriptions; organizational or other chart/document showing lines of authority regarding the certificate program	Personnel interviews regarding their roles & responsibilities
5.3.2 The certificate issuer shall communicate current policies (and procedures, where applicable) to relevant personnel and provide training as needed.		**Required:** Evidence that personnel are knowledgeable of current policies & procedures, and trained as needed Individual sign-off on policies/procedures; training log or other evidence demonstrating personnel have been trained as needed	View P&P sign-off document and/or other documentation or computer-based evidence that the requirement is met. Personnel interviews to include probing knowledge of relevant policies & procedures
5.3.3 The certificate issuer shall have sufficient personnel to conduct certificate program activities properly.	This requirement refers only to employees of the certificate issuer; non-employees are covered by Section 5.6	**Required:** Position descriptions for all certificate program staff members (employees of the CI)	Relevant personnel interviews regarding roles and responsibilities
5.3.4 The certificate issuer shall define the qualifications for personnel involved in certificate program activities.		**Required:** Position descriptions for all certificate program staff members (employees of the CI) Ensure that position descriptions DO define qualifications. If they do not, seek other evidence indicating qualifications required for relevant certificate program activities.	
5.3.5 Personnel shall be qualified for their assigned roles on the basis of appropriate education, training, or experience, or combination thereof.		**Required:** Up-to-date certificate program staff member resumes Compare resumes to job descriptions and note discrepancies for interview follow-up; professional development plans/records as needed	Relevant personnel interviews regarding qualifications and backgrounds to ensure a match with documentation

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
5.3.6 The certificate issuer shall evaluate on an ongoing basis the qualifications of personnel to perform assigned roles. Training and development plans shall be implemented where deficiencies are found.		**Required:** Evidence that personnel competency/skill deficiencies are identified and addressed Policies & procedures defining when and how personnel are evaluated; evidence that such evaluations have taken place (evaluation outcomes are documented) Training and development plans if/when deficiencies are found (not required if no deficiencies are noted in the personnel evaluation(s)	Relevant personnel Interviews to triangulate evidence; for confidentiality reasons, personnel evaluations can be viewed onsite.
5.4 Financial Management—The certificate issuer shall demonstrate responsible financial management and have sufficient financial resources to conduct certificate program activities properly.	A review to ensure checks and balances are in place to verify financial information. For established programs, financial reports for the past three years must be provided. Programs newer than three years must provide data to demonstrate financial stability such as business plans which show projected sources of funding.	**Required:** Evidence that the certificate issuer can sustain certificate program in conformance with the standard's requirements for a reasonable amount of time	Financial files that could not be sent out for document review
5.4.1 Formal financial reports shall provide evidence of financial stability.		**Acceptable evidence:** Annual profit & loss statements, balance sheets, tax returns, or other accepted indicators of fiscal health Other acceptable evidence includes cash flow statements, program budget, etc.	Onsite, view any documentation that was not provided as part of the document review. Interview those responsible for CI's financial management operations

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5.4.1.1 Where certificate programs are one element of a certificate issuer's activities, the certificate program finances shall be a clear and identifiable component of overall reports. NOTE 1—The financial reports should provide evidence that the certificate issuer can sustain the certificate program in conformance with the requirements of this practice for a reasonable amount of time.		Certificate program finances can be shown either as separate line items on an overall report OR as a program-specific profit & loss or other financial statement.	
5.4.1.2 Written procedures shall exist for proper financial controls.	Financial controls are policies & procedures that ensure reliability and integrity of financial processes and information. Acceptable financial controls include following Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP); multiple approval levels; self-approval forbidden; no 'off-book' transactions	**Required:** Written procedures for financial controls; see resource column for guidance on what these procedures should include	Onsite, view any documentation that was not provided as part of the document review. Interview those responsible for CI's financial management operations
5.5 Communication to Primary Stakeholders—The certificate issuer shall demonstrate responsible and timely communications to primary stakeholders of the certificate program.	Primary stakeholder (3.1.28) Required information for items 5.5.1(1) to (10) must be provided.		
5.5.1 The certificate issuer shall publish (or make available to primary stakeholders) the following information in advance of the program:	"In advance of the program" is key; primary stakeholders must not be required to register for the program to obtain any of this information.	Evidence examples for 5.5.1 (1)-(10) include policies, website, brochures, and/or other materials made available to primary stakeholders in advance of registration that contain, at minimum, items 1-10 (items 7-10 are only if applicable to the program)	Relevant personnel interviews; any additional evidence not provided prior to the onsite visit that aid in triangulation that this requirement is met
(1) Certificate program purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes;		**Required:** Stakeholder communications that detail certificate program purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes	

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(2) Description of the requisites to earn the certificate;		**Required:** Stakeholder communications that detail the description of requisites to earn the certificate	
(3) Qualifications of instructional personnel;	In some cases programs are not instructor-led (e.g. online self-paced programs); acceptable evidence in those cases would include qualifications of those who designed and developed the program	**Required:** Stakeholder communications that detail the qualifications of instructional personnel	
(4) Fees, deadlines, cancellation, and refund policies;		**Required:** Stakeholder communications that detail relevant fees, deadlines, cancellation, and refund policies	
(5) Statement about what inferences can appropriately be made regarding certificate holders;	Certificate holder (3.1.6)	**Required:** Stakeholder communications that detail what inferences can be made regarding certificate holders	
(6) Information collected by the certificate issuer that is treated as confidential and the conditions for disclosure of information to parties other than the individuals providing it or the certificate issuer;		**Required:** Stakeholder communications that detail conditions for collection and disclosure of confidential information	
(7) If applicable, academic or continuing education credit earned, specified in the terms outlined by the credit-approving entity;		**Required if applicable:** Stakeholder communications that describe academic or CE credit earned, specified in the credit-approving entity's terms	Additionally, any certificate or other documentation demonstrating the CI is an authorized provider of the CE credits being granted
(8) If applicable, commercial support disclosure;		**Required if applicable:** Stakeholder communications that describe commercial support activities	
(9) If applicable, any changes to the certificate program purpose, scope, intended learning outcomes, requisites, and the effective date of the changes; and	Note: if no changes have yet been made, acceptable evidence would include, at minimum, a policy/procedure outlining how notice of such changes is provided to primary stakeholders.	**Required if applicable:** Stakeholder communications that describe noted changes and their effective date	

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(10) If applicable, special requirements for participation (such as technology equipment or skills).		**Required if applicable:** Stakeholder communications that describe special participation requirements	
5.5.2 The certificate issuer shall represent the certificate program and its purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes in an accurate and responsible way.		**Required:** Current examples of marketing or registration materials used to represent the program	Interviews with personnel and certificate holders and participants
5.5.2.1 The certificate issuer shall not state or in any way imply that certificate holders are certified, licensed, accredited, or registered to engage in a specific occupation or profession.		Policies, website, brochures or other materials made available to primary stakeholders	Interviews with personnel and certificate holders and participants
5.6 Outsourcing and Commercial Support:			
5.6.1 If a certificate issuer contracts with other individuals or entities in carrying out one or more of the certificate program activities, the responsibility for assurance of quality and conformance with these standards rests with the certificate issuer.	Examples of contractors or collaborators would include co-sponsors, vendors, consultants, subcontractors, business partners.	**Required:** written polices & procedures that address outsourcing activities Evidence must include specific reference to the fact that the certificate issuer holds sole responsibility.	
5.6.1.1 The certificate issuer shall have current contracts or agreements with contractors that clearly specify the responsibilities assigned and include provisions to ensure confidentiality and prevent conflicts of interest.	Services substantially related to the certificate processes must have contracts/agreements meeting these requirements	**Required:** Copies of all contracts or agreements with contractors, subcontractors, consultants, vendors, co-sponsors, business partners, and other collaborators. Ensure such documents contain the required items	Relevant personnel interviews with employees and contractor(s) to triangulate their roles and responsibilities
5.6.1.2 The certificate issuer shall ensure each contractor is qualified to carry out the responsibilities assigned.		**Required:** Evidence of how any contractors used in carrying out program responsibilities are qualified for their role(s) Contractor/collaborator proposals, resumes/CVs, or other documentation demonstrating their qualifications for carrying out their assigned responsibilities	Personnel interviews to include any contractors or collaborators and program personnel who oversee their activities

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5.6.1.3 The certificate issuer shall monitor on an ongoing basis the performance of contractors in carrying out assigned responsibilities in accordance with documented policies (and procedures, where applicable) and in compliance with the provisions of this practice.	"Ongoing basis" means at least annually. Monitoring frequency and methods are to be appropriate for the assigned tasks, roles, and responsibilities.	**Required**: Evidence of most recent monitoring of contractors and/or collaborators who support the program Policies & procedures describing how and when monitoring takes place; documented evidence it has taken place according to those policies & procedures	Personnel interviews to include any contractors or collaborators; ask them to describe how and when they were monitored
5.6.2 The decision to issue the certificate shall not be outsourced.	All other program elements except the actual decision to issue the certificate may be outsourced.	**Required:** If commercial support is provided, copies of any formal agreements with parties providing support; if such support is for a limited time, the end date of that support Policies & procedures confirming that the decision to issue the certificate is held within the certificate issuer's organization	If commercial support is provided, interview provider to determine their understanding of the arrangement
5.6.3 In the case in which commercial support is received in whole or in part for the certificate program, the responsibility for assurance of quality and conformance with this practice rests with the certificate issuer and there shall be no undue influence created because of this financial support.	"Commercial support" includes financial or in-kind contributions to the certificate program itself or to the certificate issuer as it relates to the certificate program.	**Required, if applicable:** Contracts/agreements with the entity providing commercial financial or in-kind support that clearly specifies the provider of such support does not have any influence over the conduct and/or content of the certificate program Policies & procedures specifying how commercial support is handled, or that the certificate issuer's policy is that no such support is received	Relevant personnel interviews and interviews with any providers of commercial support

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5.7 Access to Information within Records:			
5.7.1 The records control process shall enable learners and certificate holders to receive verification and documentation, in an accurate and timely manner, of their progress in or completion of the program, earning of academic or continuing education credits (if applicable), certificate issue date, and certificate term.	Records control (3.1.30)	**Required:** Written policies, procedures, and stakeholder communications regarding how learners and certificate holders receive the stated verification and documentation Policies and procedures, websites, brochures, or other stakeholder communication specifying how learners and certificate holders may do this. If an online course, how the LMS functions to provide this information	Any documentation or evidence not obtained during document review, such as LMS processes Interview(s) with learners and/or certificate holders to determine if they know how to access their information Observation/demonstration of LMS records and other electronic records systems
5.7.2 The records control process shall enable stakeholders to confirm, in an accurate and timely manner, the certificate status of individual certificate holders.		**Required:** Written policies, procedures, and communications regarding how certificate holders and other stakeholders obtain verification and documentation Policies and procedures, websites, brochures or other communications describing how this can be done	Relevant personnel interviews; view sample record(s) as if a stakeholder
5.8 Complaints—The process for complaints shall:	Complaint (3.1.15)		
5.8.1 Be readily accessible by primary stakeholders.	"Accessible" means available through published documents, website, etc.	**Required:** written policies & procedures regarding certificate program complaints and stakeholder communications Website, stakeholder communications, other evidence that such information is accessible by primary stakeholders	Triangulate evidence that the process is readily accessible, e.g. find and go through the process as a primary stakeholder. Relevant personnel interviews

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5.8.2 Ensure that those engaged in the complaints resolution are different from those involved in the issue of the complaint.		**Required:** Evidence that conflicts of interest are avoided in the investigation and resolution of complaints Policies & procedures indicating how this is accomplished; if available, sample(s) of actual complaint submission & resolution noting who was involved	If not provided during document review, sample(s) of actual complaints submitted and their resolution, including by whom resolved. Interview personnel responsible for managing the complaints process.
5.8.3 Ensure that the complainant is informed in a timely manner of the outcome of the complaint.	Time frames must be included in policies and procedures	**Required:** Written policies & procedures indicating how long complaint resolution should take, and how the decision is communicated to complainant(s) Recent complaints (if any) and related communications indicating actual time frame(s)	Sampling of complaint records/logs demonstrating established time frames were achieved
5.8.4 Include a mechanism to track and record complaints, including actions taken in response to them.	Whether or not complaints have been received, a mechanism must be in place	**Required**: A record of complaints received and actions taken in response to them Evidence of a tracking mechanism in place even if no complaints have been received; policies and procedures for such tracking and recording	If not provided during document review, view the tracking mechanism (e.g. on computer systems or elsewhere onsite)
5.9 Appeals—The process for appeals shall:	Appeal (3.1.2)		
5.9.1 Be readily accessible by certificate program learners.	"Accessible" means available through published documents, website, etc.	**Required:** written policies & procedures regarding certificate program appeals and learner communications Website, learner communications, other evidence that such information is accessible by learners	Triangulate evidence that the process is readily accessible, e.g. find and go through the process as a learner. Relevant personnel interviews

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
5.9.2 Ensure that those engaged in the appeals determination are different from those involved in the decision being appealed.		**Required:** Evidence that conflicts of interest are avoided in the investigation and resolution of appeals Policies & procedures indicating how this is accomplished; if available, sample(s) of actual appeal submission & resolution noting who was involved	If not provided during document review, sample(s) of actual appeal(s) submitted and their resolution
5.9.3 Ensure that the appellant is informed in a timely manner of the outcome of the appeal.	Timeframes must be included in policies and procedures	**Required:** Written policies & procedures indicating how long appeal resolution should take, and how the decision is communicated to appellant Recent appeals (if any) and related communications indicating actual time frame(s)	Sampling of appeal records demonstrating established time frames were achieved
5.9.4 Include a mechanism to track and record appeals, including actions taken to resolve them.	Whether or not appeals have been received, a mechanism must be in place	**Required**: A record of complaints received and actions taken in response to them Evidence of a tracking mechanism in place even if no complaints have been received; policies and procedures for such tracking and recording	If not provided during document review, view the tracking mechanism (e.g. on computer systems or elsewhere onsite)

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6. Requirements for the Certificate Program			
6.1 Certificate Program Instructional Design:			
6.1.1 The certificate program shall be created and guided by an instructional design model and processes that follow training and education industry generally accepted practices.	Certificate Program Instructional Design Plan (3.1.9) No design model is specified in the standard; what is used must, however, be "generally accepted" *in the training and education industry*. In other words, if the model used is not commonly recognized, evidence that it is a published/recognized model must be provided.	**Required:** A description of the certificate program's instructional design model and processes Certificate Program Instructional Design Plan that meets the required elements of this document in 6.1.2	As part of the onsite visit and triangulation for this requirement as well as 6.1.5, 6.1.6, 6.1.7: Interview program management about the process; subject-matter experts about their role(s); and instructional designer(s) about the actual course creation: Which model(s) guided the design? What processes were followed? Is it consistent with what is described in the CPIDP? Additional probing questions based on what is provided and interview responses; if model used is not one commonly recognized, ask for rationale for use and evidence that the model used is published/recognized
6.1.2 The certificate program instructional design plan shall include, at minimum:	The documented process must be consistent with training/learning industry-accepted practices	**Required:** documented Certificate Program Instructional Design Plan containing at minimum items 1-4 below Any additional documentation that indicates the process outlined in the CPIDP was followed in course creation, e.g. formal meeting minutes, discussion notes, work product, etc.	Interview people involved in creation of the CPIDP and certificate program, including program management, instructional designers, and/or subject-matter experts. These interviews will likely include triangulation of this requirement and 6.1.5, 6.1.6, and 6.1.7 Probe as needed concerning what the CPIDP contains and what people say about the process used and how relevance will be monitored and updated as needed.
(1) Instructional design model and processes the certificate issuer initially used and will continue to use to identify the learner needs, design and develop the program, implement the program, and evaluate the program;	The documented process must be consistent with training/learning industry-accepted practices Note: this requirement includes "and will continue to use" to ensure ongoing changes and improvements to the program follow the same model/processes	CPIDP must include these elements; reference must be made to how these elements will be conducted for updates/maintenance once the initial course is created	See above, 6.1.1 and 6.1.2

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
(2) How the results of a needs assessment initially informed and will continue to inform the target audience, program purpose, program scope, intended learning outcomes, certificate requisites, and certificate term;	Documented process must be consistent with training/learning industry-accepted practices	CPIDP must include how the initial needs assessment was conducted and how its results informed the stated items, as well as how needs will be monitored going forward that would inform changes to the program Evidence that a needs assessment has and will be conducted periodically, e.g. formal report(s), assessment tool and process used to establish initially and ensure continuing program relevance	See above, 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 Interview personnel involved in conducting/analyzing the needs assessment: How was it conducted? How were results used to define target audience, program purpose & scope, learning outcomes and certificate requisites and term?
(3) How the certificate issuer initially ensured and will continue to ensure the program purpose, scope, intended learning outcomes, course and assessment content, and course and assessment delivery are aligned; and	Documented process must be consistent with training/learning industry-accepted practices	CPIDP must include how the stated alignment was first achieved and is maintained, especially as changes are made to any of the stated items and/or assessment. Evidence that it was executed falls under 6.1.5.2, 6.1.6.2 CPIDP, including evidence that alignment exists and is monitored; any external documentation that shows implementation, such as a test blueprint or training matrix	Interview personnel regarding what the CPIDP says as well as how it was actually executed under 6.1.5 and 6.1.6 Interview personnel involved in program alignment: How were purpose, scope, outcomes, course and assessment content, and course and assessment delivery initially aligned? How is alignment being maintained? Additional probing questions based on responses
(4) If applicable, how the certificate issuer initially ensured and will continue to ensure all versions of the certificate program are consistent. NOTE 2—Certificate program versions may use different languages, delivery modes, course sponsors, course instructors, etc.		CPIDP must include how any different versions of the program were initially made consistent, and how they will continue to be identical as changes are made Other evidence to ensure consistency will depend in part on specific versions utilized, e.g. online vs. face-to-face, different instructors, different languages, etc., including how it is ensured consistency is maintained. Examples include courseware versions, instructor manuals/guides, translator's process, etc.	As may be relevant, interview personnel involved in creating and implementing different versions of the certificate program. These may include instructional designer(s), instructors (face-to-face or online), translators, and others involved. For foreign-language translations, ask translators about the process used to ensure all versions of the course and assessment are identical. Probe as needed to ensure proper quality control was undertaken.

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6.1.3 Certificate Requisites:			
6.1.3.1 The certificate requisites shall be defined and documented.	"Requisites" are anything required by the learner to earn the certificate, e.g. passing score on assessment, minimum attendance, project completion, etc.	**Required:** Publicly available documents and stakeholder communications that describe certificate requisites CPIDP, other policies and procedures and/or stakeholder communications that describe the requisites	Validate document review through relevant interviews
6.1.3.2 The certificate requisites shall be aligned with the program purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes.	Rationale must be provided supporting requisite alignment.	**Required:** Evidence demonstrating how certificate requisites align with the program purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes Evidence examples: CPIDP; test blueprint; policies & procedures or other documents such as website(s) and/or brochures available pre-registration; documentation showing how requisites are determined, enforced, and reviewed	Interview(s) with program management, 1-2 Advisory Group members based on their involvement with determining requisites
6.1.3.3 The certificate requisites shall include:		**Required:** Written policies & procedures that address certificate requisites	
(1) Minimum requirements for participation in the certificate program learning event or events, and	Covers things like course "seat" time (face-to-face or online), software or technology requirements, behavioral activities, etc.	Evidence examples: Policies & procedures, CPIDP; triangulate with evidence for 5.5.1 (2) – how the requisites are communicated to primary stakeholders to ensure internal and external documentation is consistent	Triangulate document review via interview(s) with program management, 1-2 Advisory Group members, and/or viewing any relevant back-end systems

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
(2) Passing score on the summative assessment(s) covering the certificate program's intended learning outcomes.	Examples of minimum achievement requirements for learner assessment include a passing score for a test, a successfully completed project (for behavioral objectives), have met other specific experiential requirements, etc.	Evidence examples: CPIDP or other documentation stating the passing score and that the summative assessment covers the outcomes, e.g. test blueprint

Clear statement of required passing score on assessment and/or other requirements (e.g. a behavioral assessment/project) to earn certificate noted in website and/or brochures that are available pre-registration; policies & procedures showing process for determining the passing score are present; any time requirements within which the program and its assessment must be completed

Triangulate with evidence for 5.5.1 (2) – how the requisites are communicated to primary stakeholders in ways that show consistency with internal documentation | Triangulate document review via interview(s) with program management, 1-2 Advisory Group members, and/or viewing any relevant back-end systems |
| 6.1.3.4 The certificate requisites shall not include: | | **Required:** Written policies & procedures that address certificate requisites | |
| (1) Provisions for testing out of (or otherwise waiving) participation in the full or majority of the certificate program learning event or events, or | | Ensure such requirements are not present in the CPIDP; no such requirements are in policies and procedures for program execution; and are not present or implied in website, brochures, other promotional material | During interview(s) with program management and/or Advisory Group members, verify no such provisions exist |
| (2) Ongoing requirements for certificate renewal.

NOTE 3—Ongoing requirements are considered an essential distinction of certification from certificate programs. A certificate program facilitates accomplishment of specified learning outcomes and assesses the learners' attainment of those intended learning outcomes at a given time. As with an academic degree (and unlike certification), the certificate issuer does not track the certificate holders' maintenance or improvement of competencies over time. | | Ensure such requirements are not present in CPIDP; no such requirements are in policies and procedures for program execution; not present or implied in website/brochures/other promotional material | During interview(s) with program management and/or Advisory Group members, verify no such provisions exist |

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6.1.4 Certificate Term:			
6.1.4.1 A certificate's term shall be determined based on the program's purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes and the anticipated rate of obsolescence of the certificate program's content. NOTE 4—The certificate term will inform stakeholders of the length of time that the certificate content should be considered relevant and up to date. Any term is acceptable, including a "valid-for-life" term for those programs that cover content that is timeless. For illustrative purposes, a certificate in information technology would likely have a much shorter certificate term than one in business writing.	The term may not be justified solely based on jurisdictional laws and/or regulations; program-related rationale must also exist.	**Required:** Statement of certificate's term and explanation of the data and rationale used to make that determination CPIDP indicating how and on what basis the term was determined; promotional materials such as brochures & website that accurately describe the term; meeting minutes of program management & Advisory Group indicating discussions of certificate term	Interview(s) with program management, 1-2 Advisory Group members that probe process for determining term
==6.1.4.2 The certificate term and the rationale for it shall be documented.==	The term may not be justified solely based on jurisdictional laws and/or regulations; program-related rationale must also exist.	The term and its rationale is documented in the Certificate Program Instructional Design Plan and in any relevant policies & procedures	Any documentation not made available in advance of the onsite visit that may aid in triangulating evidence this requirement is met. Interview(s) with program management that demonstrate the documented term and rationale reflects what took place
6.1.5 Course—The course(s) shall be:			
6.1.5.1 Designed, developed, and delivered by qualified personnel following training and education industry generally accepted practices for instructional design and adult learning;	Personnel can be staff, consultants, and/or volunteers, etc. Qualified personnel means that their training, education and experiences are aligned with their certificate program responsibilities. No design model is specified in the standard; what is used must, however, be "generally accepted" *in the training and education industry*. In other words, if the model used is not commonly recognized, evidence that it is a published/recognized model must be provided.	**Required:** Evidence that the model used is generally accepted practice (especially if not commonly known); resumes and position descriptions of staff and any contractors involved in the process Evidence examples: CPIDP that describes a generally accepted instructional design model (ADDIE, SAM, etc.), inclusion of needs assessment results, a design document, competency checks, "working papers" showing process and evolution, formal meeting minutes or summaries, course outlines, course materials (e.g. instructor guide, slides, handouts, etc.) Resumes of designers; portfolios describing experience	Any documentation not made available in advance of the onsite visit that may aid in triangulating evidence this requirement is met Interview instructional designers and technical writers associated with course For online courses, if not viewed in advance of onsite visit, gain access to and peruse actual course environment as viewed by learners. If the opportunity to observe even part of a face-to-face course is available, do so.

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
(1) If course(s) are translated into one or more languages, measures shall be taken to ensure accurate and appropriate translation.	Note: in some languages (e.g. Spanish, Chinese) there are multiple dialects/written versions that can impact the effectiveness of the translation. Ensure the dialect selected is appropriate for the targeted audience.	**Required:** If translated, evidence of the steps taken to ensure accurate and appropriate translation Evidence examples: Resumes of translators, website of translation company describing expertise; if contracted, clear description of responsibilities and how it will be ensured that the translation is identical to the original program	Interview program management responsible for ensuring accuracy about how they did so. Interview translators and have them describe their process to ensure accurate and appropriate translation.
6.1.5.2 Aligned with the certificate program's purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes; and		**Required:** Evidence that the curriculum and instructional design plan align with the program's purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes Evidence examples: CPIDP including how alignment will be assured; alignment training matrix; formal meeting summaries/minutes that describe process to ensure alignment; promotional brochures, website, etc. where alignment is provided	Relevant personnel interviews: program personnel, Advisory Group members, subject-matter experts, etc. Any additional evidence or documentation not provided in advance of the onsite visit that can help triangulate the requirement is met
6.1.5.3 Delivered in ways appropriate for the purpose and scope of the certificate program and the accomplishment of the intended learning outcomes.	Examples of delivery include presentation, reading, facilitation, observation, experiential learning, demonstration, etc.	**Required:** Description of course delivery methodologies and the rationale behind that determination Evidence examples: CPIDP including how delivery methods were determined and how they are appropriate for the certificate program; course outline, course materials, formal meeting summaries/minutes that include discussions of methodology choices	Relevant personnel interviews: program personnel, Advisory Group members, subject-matter experts, contractors, etc. For online courses, if not viewed in advance of onsite visit, gain access to and peruse actual course environment as viewed by learners. If face-to-face, interview instructors to confirm methodologies used. Any additional evidence or documentation not provided in advance of the onsite visit that can help triangulate the requirement is met.

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6.1.6 Summative Assessment—The summative assessment(s) shall:	Assessment (3.1.4) Criterion referenced assessment (3.1.18) Formative assessment (3.1.23) Summative assessment (3.1.32)		
6.1.6.1 Be designed, developed, and delivered by qualified personnel following training and education industry generally accepted practices for assessing learning outcomes;	Personnel can be staff, consultants, and/or volunteers. Qualified personnel means that their training, education and experiences are aligned with their certificate program responsibilities.

No design model/process is specified in the standard; what is used must, however, be "generally accepted" *in the training and education industry*. In other words, if the model/process used is not commonly recognized, evidence that it is a published/recognized model must be provided. | **Required:** Evidence that the model/process used is generally accepted practice (especially if not commonly known); resumes and position descriptions of staff and any contractors involved in the process

Other evidence examples: Certificate Program Instructional Design Plan that describes a generally accepted process for creating a summative assessment; exam blueprints, test and item design, development, and maintenance processes, policies, procedures; test delivery methods; policies, procedures, methodology for assessing test and item performance; assessment form(s) or sample form if randomly generated

Resumes of assessment designers and/or psychometricians, or website of the assessment development company describing expertise | Any documentation not made available in advance of the onsite visit that may aid in triangulating evidence this requirement is met

Interview all personnel associated with designing and developing the assessment (employees, contractors, subject-matter experts, etc.)

If online course, view LMS back end and view processes and parameters for assessment generation |
| ==(1) If assessment(s) are translated into one or more languages, measures shall be taken to ensure accurate and appropriate translation.== | | **Required:** If translated, evidence of the steps taken to ensure accurate and appropriate translation

Evidence examples: Resumes of translators, website of translation company describing expertise; if contracted, clear description of responsibilities and how it will be ensured that the translation is identical to the original program | Interview program management responsible for ensuring accuracy about how they did so.

Interview translators and have them describe their process to ensure accurate and appropriate translation. |

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6.1.6.2 Be aligned with and assess the extent to which learners achieve the intended learning outcomes;	Alignment of assessment to the learning outcomes must be documented. The topics/items in the assessment must be aligned to the topics covered in the course, and in proportion to the emphasis or time spent on the concepts covered in the course.	**Required:** Documentation showing how the assessment design is aligned with and accurately measures the intended learning outcomes Evidence examples include: CPIDP including how alignment is generated and maintained; test blueprint showing linkage between intended learning outcomes and test content at the item level; determination of number of items per learning outcome to detect achievement	Relevant personnel interviews: program personnel, Advisory Group members, subject-matter experts, etc. including those involved in determining content weights for the exam Any additional evidence or documentation not provided in advance of the onsite visit that can help triangulate the requirement is met
6.1.6.3 Use assessment methods and delivery appropriate for and consistent with the certificate program's purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes; NOTE 5—The assessment should be consistent with the level of the intended learning outcomes identified (that is, if it is indicated that behavior changes or results are intended outcomes, then those outcomes shall be measured).	The format of the assessment should reflect the level of learning to be achieved, as defined by the learning outcomes. If the outcomes are knowledge-based, a multiple-choice test is appropriate; if the outcomes are behavioral- or skill-based, a performance-based assessment is more appropriate.	**Required:** Documentation showing how the assessment methods and delivery align with the program's purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes Evidence examples include: CPIDP including how the assessment method and delivery align as required; documented test blueprint identifying and/or demonstrating the assessment format For concept/knowledge-based learning outcomes, view a multiple-choice test and ensure an appropriate number of forms are used; for skill/performance-based learning outcomes, view an established scoring rubric	Relevant personnel interviews: program personnel, Advisory Group members, subject-matter experts, contractors, etc. Any additional evidence or documentation not provided in advance of the onsite visit that can help triangulate the requirement is met. If a performance-based assessment is used, if possible view it being conducted. At minimum, interview those who conduct the assessment.
6.1.6.4 Provide an opportunity for learners to provide feedback on the content of the assessment method or instrument; and		**Required:** Evidence that learners have an opportunity to provide feedback on the assessment(s) Evidence examples include: CPIDP including the process for learner feedback; policies & procedures for how feedback is collected; feedback/evaluation form including one or more questions about the assessment; results of end-of-course and/or other learner feedback; any records of learner complaints or appeals regarding the assessment.	If not provided in advance of onsite visit, sampling or summary of actual assessment feedback received, if applicable For feedback collected online, view collection method (e.g. LMS) and reporting of feedback Record sampling of complaint records and feedback forms.

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6.1.6.5 Have procedures in place to verify the identity of individuals being assessed and to ensure the security of the assessment instrument.		**Required:** Written policies & procedures used to verify learner identity and ensure security of the assessment Evidence examples include: Procedures that describe how learner identity is verified; procedures for ensuring the security of the assessment instrument; any past incidents of security breaches and how remedied; policy/procedure for assessment retakes if retakes are permitted For face-to-face courses, procedures for securing the assessment and answer key before and after test is administered; instructor manuals providing requirements for handling the assessment, etc.; how learner identity is verified For online programs, procedures describing how learners access the test	Relevant personnel interviews: program personnel, IT or vendor personnel responsible for securing online systems, etc.; instructors and/or other individuals responsible for administering face-to-face exams Demonstration of online assessment security measures, e.g. LMS system, login procedures, security processes, etc. Any additional evidence or documentation not provided in advance of the onsite visit that can help triangulate that the requirement is met
(1) The assessment shall be administered with a level of identity verification and instrument security congruent with the certificate program's purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes.		**Required:** Written policies & procedures used to verify learner identity to ensure security of the assessment Evidence examples include: When exam retakes are allowed, polices & procedures describing under what conditions retakes are allowed, how many retakes are allowed without having to retake the course, and use of multiple forms to protect over-exposure of test content For online courses, go through the course and assessment as a learner would to verify stated procedures for identity verification and instrument security are followed.	Relevant personnel interviews: program personnel, IT or vendor personnel responsible for securing online systems, etc.; instructors and/or other individuals responsible for administering face-to-face exams Probe for procedures used for instrument security and learner identity verification to ensure it triangulates with documented procedures.

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6.1.7 Summative Assessment Scoring System—The assessment scoring system shall:	Summative assessment (3.1.32)		
6.1.7.1 Be designed and conducted by qualified personnel following training and education industry generally accepted practices in assessing learner outcomes;	Personnel can be staff, consultants, and/or volunteers. Qualified personnel means that their training, education and experiences are aligned with their certificate program responsibilities. No design model/process is specified in the standard; what is used must, however, be "generally accepted" *in the training and education industry*. In other words, if the model/process used is not commonly recognized, evidence that it is a published/recognized model must be provided.	**Required:** Evidence that the model/process used is generally accepted practice (especially if not commonly known); resumes and position descriptions of staff and any contractors involved in the process Evidence examples include: CPIDP including how the assessment scoring is developed and managed; policies & procedures related to establishing, maintaining, and refining the assessment passing score; formal meeting minutes and/or discussion summaries demonstrating the process used Resumes of qualified personnel or website of their company describing expertise	Relevant personnel interviews: program personnel, contractors, subject-matter experts, etc. involved in establishing the scoring system Any additional evidence or documentation not provided in advance of the onsite visit that can help triangulate the requirement is met
6.1.7.2 Use methods appropriate for and consistent with the certificate program's purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes;		**Required:** Documentation showing how the scoring system methods align with the program's purpose, scope, and intended learning outcomes Evidence examples include: CPIDP including how the scoring system is developed and implemented; policies & procedures related to establishing and maintaining the scoring system; formal meeting minutes and/or discussion summaries demonstrating the methods used; evidence the system is appropriate for the certificate program	Relevant personnel interviews: program personnel, contractors, subject-matter experts, etc. involved in establishing the scoring system Any additional evidence or documentation not provided in advance of the onsite visit that can help triangulate the requirement is met

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6.1.7.3 Include passing score(s) identified through a method appropriate for a criterion-referenced assessment; and	Criterion referenced assessment (3.1.18) No particular criterion-referenced methodology is specified in the standard; what is used must, however, be "generally accepted" *in the training and education industry*. In other words, if the method used is not commonly recognized, evidence that it is a published/recognized method must be provided.	**Required:** Documented methodology used to establish the assessment(s)' minimum passing score Evidence examples include: CPIDP including the methodology used for determining the passing score; policies & procedures for conducting a criterion-referenced passing score study Documentation should provide details on the process used and its outcomes, including: - personnel responsible for leading the effort and their qualifications; - names and qualifications of all SME raters/judges responsible for determining the passing score; - instructions and/or training provided to SMEs; - how intermediate information is combined into the final passing score; - how item weighting is determined when differential item weighting is used. - "working papers" demonstrating the process used follows the selected methodology	Relevant personnel interviews: program personnel, one or more SME raters, test development personnel (including any contractors), other individuals involved in the scoring process. Probe the process used to verify the process used matches that stated in documentation Any additional evidence or documentation not provided in advance of the onsite visit that can help triangulate the requirement is met
6.1.7.4 Include documented answer key(s), rubric(s) or other scoring guide(s).	Documentation must be provided on how consistency in scoring is achieved across examiners and administrations, particularly when a scoring rubric is used for behavioral assessment	**Required:** Assessment answer keys, rubrics, and other scoring guides; documentation of the rater training methodology and scoring procedures, as applicable. Evidence examples include: Documented answer key(s) for multiple-choice tests For performance-based assessments: scoring guide(s), scorer training and calibration methods; calibration should include details regarding instructions provided to raters and evidence of calibration and inter-rater reliability	Relevant personnel interviews: program personnel, one or more SME raters, test development personnel (including any contractors), other individuals involved in the scoring process Demonstration of assessment and scoring procedures, e.g. via LMS or by proctor/instructor Any additional evidence or documentation not provided in advance of the onsite visit that can help triangulate the requirement is met

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6.1.8 Summative Assessment Results—The results of the summative assessment(s) shall be:			
6.1.8.1 Communicated to participants in a consistent, timely, and appropriate manner; and	Procedures must include the timeline and modality for communicating results	**Required:** Written policies & procedures for communicating assessment results to participants Evidence examples include: CPIDP including how test results are communicated to learners; policies & procedures specifying how and when results are provided to learners; documentation that results are communicated (online or face-to-face); sampling of records demonstrating such communication	Relevant personnel interviews: program personnel and others involved in ensuring communication of results (e.g. IT, instructors); one or two learners to validate results delivery process Any additional evidence or documentation not provided in advance of the onsite visit that can help triangulate the requirement is met
6.1.8.2 Documented as part of the learner's record.		**Required:** Written policies & procedures regarding the documentation of assessment results Evidence examples include: CPIDP including how test results are handled; policies & procedures describing the process used to document results in the learner record	Relevant personnel interviews: program personnel and others involved in documenting learner results (e.g. IT, vendors for LMS; instructors for face-to-face programs) For online programs, view sampling of student records in system demonstrating recorded scores. For face-to-face programs, view mechanism used and sampling of student records demonstrating recorded scores. Any additional evidence or documentation not provided in advance of the onsite visit that can help triangulate the requirement is met

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6.1.9 Credit—If the certificate issuer grants academic or continuing education credit, it shall:			
6.1.9.1 Adhere to a uniform system of measurement and granting of credits (if deploying its own credit system) or adhere to its chosen organization's requirements for granting academic or continuing education credits (if using another organization's credit system) and		**Required:** If applicable, written policies & procedures regarding the credit system utilized CPIDP including the credit-granting process, including who is responsible for reporting CE credits as may be required Evidence of approval by credit-granting entity, e.g. a certificate, letter, form, etc. granting the authority to offer CE credits under its system	If applicable, interview certificate-issuer personnel responsible for managing granting of credits, whether internal or external system is used If applicable: if there is no documented evidence of approval by outside credit-granting agency, interview responsible party in that agency
6.1.9.2 Determine and publish the type and quantity of credits granted and requirements for earning credits in advance of offering the certificate program.		**Required:** If applicable, publicly available documentation (in advance of registration) specifying the type and quantity of credits granted, and requirements for earning credits Website, brochures, and other promotional material specifying, in advance of the program, the type and quantify of credits granted and the requirements for earning them	
6.1.10 Certificate Program Evaluation:			
6.1.10.1 The certificate issuer shall conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the certificate program on a regular basis.	"Regular basis" is generally accepted as at least annually, although the CI may choose to conduct some or all elements of the evaluation more frequently.	**Required:** Date conducted and evidence of the most recent program evaluation CPIDP describing evaluation methodology and rationale for its frequency; policies & procedures for when and how the evaluation is conducted; evidence that a "comprehensive program evaluation" as described in the standard has been conducted within the past 12 months (e.g. documented as required by 6.1.10.6)	Interviews with personnel responsible for and/or involved with the program evaluation and its elements Interview 1-2 members of the Advisory Group to ensure their participation as required by 5.1.4.3

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6.1.10.2 The program evaluation shall measure the quality, effectiveness, and value of the certificate program against stated program performance objectives.	Ensure that program performance objectives focus on the certificate program itself. For example, "value" might be value to the CI; however in reference to the program it includes value to learners and other primary stakeholders, to the relevant industry, etc.	**Required:** Each stated program performance objective that measures quality, effectiveness, and value of the certificate program CPIDP including stated program performance objectives (which may change year to year) and methodology for their evaluation; relevant policies & procedures; documented evaluation outcomes showing that each PPO was evaluated; evidence that the Advisory Group was involved as required in 5.1.4 (e.g. meeting minutes); inclusion of results in documented evaluation findings (6.1.10.6)	Interviews with personnel responsible for and/or involved with establishing program performance objectives as well as with the program evaluation and its elements Interview 1-2 members of the Advisory Group to ensure their participation as required by 5.1.4.3
6.1.10.3 The program evaluation shall measure the quality and effectiveness of learner assessment methods/instruments.		**Required:** Evidence that the program evaluation measures items 1, 2, and 3 below CPIDP including methodology for measuring the quality and effectiveness of the learner assessment; relevant policies & procedures for when and how it is conducted; formal meeting minutes/summaries demonstrating relevant discussions Evaluation should include: (1) Pass rates; (2) Learner feedback (surveys); (3) A description of the manner in which SMEs evaluated the linkage between the assessment and ILOs; (4) A description of the method(s) used to design, develop and implement the assessment; (5) Analysis of item performance (e.g. distractor analysis, item difficulties, item discrimination); (6) Form reliability across forms; (7) For new programs, preliminary findings from a pilot (e.g., distractor analysis, item difficulties, item discrimination, and reliability)	Interview personnel responsible for monitoring and measuring assessment performance. Interview learners.

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
(1) Assessment methods/instruments shall be reviewed to verify appropriate and accurate linkage to and measurement of the learning outcomes.		**Required:** Evidence that this item was measured for quality and effectiveness Evidence examples include: CPIDP including how assessment is reviewed to ensure linkage to and measurement of the learning outcomes; policies & procedures for how and when this is done; how the Advisory Group and any SMEs are involved; formal meeting minutes/summaries demonstrating discussion of linkage; test blueprint or other documentation of the linkage; results of SME/Advisory Group review of the linkage; inclusion of results in documented evaluation findings (6.1.10.6)	Interviews with personnel responsible for and/or involved with verifying and establishing linkage, including employees, contractors, and/or SMEs Interview 1-2 members of the Advisory Group to ensure their participation as required by 5.1.4.3
<mark>(2) Assessment question and form performance shall be reviewed.</mark>	Generally accepted industry practice would include, at minimum, item difficulty, item discrimination, and form reliability. Evidence of validity (e.g., content, criterion, construct) of use of the test result is also appropriate. Documentation of generally accepted industry practices that are relevant to the program can be submitted to support rationale for the program's evaluation methods and decisions.	**Required:** Evidence that assessment question and form performance was reviewed as part of the comprehensive program evaluation Evidence examples include: CPIDP including how question and form performance is reviewed; policies & procedures for how and when this is done; how the Advisory Group and any other personnel are involved; formal meeting minutes/summaries demonstrating discussion of assessment performance; inclusion of results in documented evaluation findings (6.1.10.6) Evidence demonstrating conduct of an analysis of item and form performance from the operational use of the assessment. This should include item difficulties and item discrimination, and reliability (e.g., inter-rater, test-retest, or classification reliability), depending on the assessment method used.	Interviews with personnel responsible for and/or involved with administering, maintaining/updating, and evaluating the assessment performance, including employees, contractors, and/or SMEs Interview 1-2 members of the Advisory Group to ensure their participation as required by 5.1.4.3.

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
continued from previous page: (2) Assessment question and form performance shall be reviewed		If there are multiple forms available in different languages, then form and item statistics should be performed for each language separately, and evidence that the different forms are equivalent to each other should be demonstrated.	
(3) If applicable, evaluator performance shall be reviewed.	Evaluators are most commonly used for performance-based assessments. They use a rubric to determine the learner's score to ensure that all learners are equally and consistently evaluated. Review of evaluator performance helps ensure that all evaluators are performing consistently.	**Required:** If applicable, evidence that the performance of evaluators (e.g. of a performance-based assessment) is reviewed CPIDP including, if applicable, methodology for use of assessment evaluators; policies & procedures for how evaluators are selected, managed, trained, and evaluated; learner feedback on assessment and its methodology; formal meeting minutes/summaries demonstrating discussion of evaluator performance; analysis of rubric used by evaluators demonstrating consistent results; evaluator performance reviews; inclusion of results in documented evaluation findings (6.1.10.6) Documentation should include evidence of scorer training and calibration. Calibration should include details on instructions provided to raters and evidence of inter-rater reliability. Evidence of training of new raters and rater calibration as well as of additional training and re-calibration of raters to accompany assessment or scoring changes.	Interviews with personnel responsible for administering & managing assessment evaluators as well as the evaluators and any proctors involved Evaluator/instructor evaluation feedback, if not provided in advance of the onsite visit

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6.1.10.4 The program evaluation shall provide learners an opportunity to provide feedback on the certificate program design, content, delivery, and assessments.		**Required:** Explanation for how learners are given the opportunity to provide feedback on the noted elements CPIDP including how learners provide feedback; policies & procedures for how and when such feedback is collected; feedback instrument and sample of feedback received using it; formal meeting minutes/summaries demonstrating discussion of learner feedback; inclusion of feedback results in documented evaluation findings (6.1.10.6)	Interviews with personnel responsible for obtaining and analyzing learner feedback; 1-2 certificate holders re how they provided feedback For online courses, view LMS back end showing collection and analysis of learner feedback For face-to-face courses view actual completed forms and/or documentation of feedback provided
6.1.10.5 The program evaluation shall include mechanisms to monitor and identify regularly the need for changes to the program's purpose, scope, or learning outcomes and include mechanisms to ensure that the program is revised in a timely manner to reflect needed changes.		**Required:** Explanation of the system used to monitor and identify the need for changes to the stated items; statement of any changes made to the program as a result of the program evaluation CPIDP including methodology for monitoring & identifying needed changes and revisions; policies & procedures for how and when this is done (the "mechanism"); evidence that the mechanism is used as part of the program evaluation; formal meeting minutes/summaries demonstrating discussions of the process and results (particularly of Advisory Group since their advice must be sought); relevant internal communications	Relevant personnel interviews concerning how monitoring for changes and making resulting revisions are managed. Include 1-2 Advisory Group members to establish/confirm their involvement per 5.1.4.3. Validate any changes to the program that may be observable, such as online course elements.

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
6.1.10.6 The program evaluation methodology, findings, and, if applicable, planned certificate program changes based on the findings shall be documented.		**Required:** Documentation of the program evaluation methodology, findings, and any planned changes based on findings Evidence examples: Documentation of the program evaluation as stated in the requirement; CPIDP including methodology for documenting the stated items and process; policies & procedures for how and when this is done, including how changes based on the findings will be assigned and executed; formal meeting minutes/summaries demonstrating relevant discussions, including Advisory Group involvement in the program evaluation per 5.1.4.3	Relevant personnel interviews concerning the evaluation process, its outcomes, and its documentation; interview 1-2 Advisory Group members to establish/confirm their involvement per 5.1.4.3
7. Requirements for Certificate Issuance and Use			
7.1 The certificate issuer shall issue certificates in a responsible manner and inform certificate holders and primary stakeholders about proper use and interpretation of the certificate issued.		**Required:** Written policies & procedures for issuing certificates and stakeholder communications regarding use	Relevant personnel interviews concerning the process of issuing certificates
7.1.1 A certificate shall be issued to all certificate holders.		**Required:** Evidence of any communications accompanying an issued certificate Evidence examples: sample certificate; cover letter sent with it if mailed; online messages within LMS; email, etc.	For online courses, view LMS mechanism for certificate issuance
7.1.1.1 The certificate shall be issued after all requisites for the certificate are fulfilled by learners and verified by the certificate issuer.		**Required:** Stated process used to determine that all certificate requisites have been fulfilled and verified Evidence example: P&Ps describing the process	Relevant personnel interviews concerning the process of issuing certificates; sampling of learner records

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
7.1.1.2 The decision to issue a certificate shall be made by the certificate issuer based solely on the information gathered during the certificate program process.		**Required:** Evidence of stakeholder communications that prevent transfer of the certificate to another individual Evidence example: P&Ps describing how the decision to issue a certificate is made that reflect the requirement	Relevant personnel interviews concerning the process of issuing certificates; sampling of learner records
7.1.1.3 The certificate shall be issued to an individual and shall be nontransferable.		**Required:** Evidence of stakeholder communications that prevent transfer of the certificate to another individual Evidence example: P&Ps describing how the certificate is issued and that it is not transferable; sample stakeholder communications that prohibit transfer of the certificate to someone else	Relevant personnel interviews concerning the process of issuing certificates; sampling of learner records
7.1.1.4 The certificate issued shall be signed or otherwise authorized by an authority designated by the certificate issuer and shall include, as a minimum, the following information:		**Required:** Sample certificate issued to individuals that includes the six minimum requirements listed below (1-6) Evidence example: P&Ps and or CPIDP indicating the minimum items to be included on the certificate	Relevant personnel interviews concerning the process of issuing certificates; sampling of learner records
(1) Name of the certificate holder;			
(2) Unique identifier;			
(3) Title and scope of the certificate program; NOTE 6—Often, the title of the certificate program describes the scope. If the title is not descriptive, then the scope should be described.			
(4) Name of the certificate issuer;			
(5) Designation and associated acronym granted, if applicable; and			
(6) Certificate issue date and certificate term.			

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
7.1.1.5 The certificate issuer shall invalidate a certificate only if the person it was issued to is found to have not fulfilled the certificate program requisites. NOTE 7—Examples of circumstances that might lead to the certificate issuer's invalidation of a certificate include a learner's falsification or misrepresentation of identity or information to the certificate issuer or participation in activities that provided an unfair advantage in meeting the certificate program's requirements. Invalidation occurs only when it has been discovered that the certificate should not have been issued in the first place. This is distinguished from revocation which is the removal of a credential (such as a certification or licensure) when the ongoing requirements of the program are not met. Since certificate programs do not have ongoing requirements, the certificate issued here is never revoked.		**Required:** Evidence of any certificate invalidations that have occurred Policies & procedures for certificate invalidation; if any certificates have been invalidated, documentation of process and result	Relevant personnel interviews concerning the process of invalidating certificates; sampling of records of invalidated certificates if any
7.1.2 A certificate issuer may grant a designation or designation acronym, or both, to certificate holders only under the condition that the designation or designation acronym, or both, granted shall not include the words "certified," "certificated," "licensed," "registered," or "accredited" or in any other way imply such statuses. NOTE 8—If a designation or designation acronym, or both, is granted, the following standardized format is encouraged: Designation: Certificate Holder in (subject matter) Designation Acronym: CH-(acronym representing the certificate designation) Example: Designation: Certificate Holder in Weight Management Designation Acronym: CH-WM	See also 5.5.2. This requirement applies only if a designation or designation acronym is granted.	**Required:** If applicable, written policies & procedures regarding designations and designation acronyms granted to certificate holders; sample of any designations, designation acronyms, logos, or marks associated with the certificate Policies & procedures for granting designations & acronyms; promotional materials, website, primary stakeholder & certificate holder communications	Relevant personnel interviews concerning use of the designation / acronym

Requirement	Clarification of Requirement as needed	Initial Document Review (includes required application evidence)	Initial Onsite Review
7.1.2.1 If a designation or designation acronym, or both, is granted, the certificate issuer shall establish an appropriate system to track and monitor use by certificate holders.	This requirement applies only if a designation or designation acronym is granted.	**Required:** Documentation regarding the system used to track and monitor designation and/or designation acronym use P&Ps for managing issuance and use of designations & acronyms, including tracking and monitoring systems; evidence of such monitoring and any required action	Relevant personnel interviews concerning use of the designation / acronym; interview of 1-2 certificate holders to assess use and communications received
7.1.2.2 The certificate issuer shall document, manage, and communicate to primary stakeholders the conditions for use of the certificate issued and any associated designations, designation acronyms, or other marks or logos.		**Required:** Evidence of stakeholder communication regarding the conditions for use of certificate issued and associated designations, designation acronyms, or other marks/logos P&Ps for managing use of the certificate and how that information is communicated to primary stakeholders; if a designation or acronym is granted and/or marks/logos are available for use, P&Ps covering management and use of those items; evidence of stakeholder communications regarding such use	Relevant personnel interviews regarding certificate use and, if applicable, use of any associated designations/acronyms. Interview 1-2 certificate holders regarding their understanding of this.
<mark>7.1.3 If a digital badge is issued, the badge shall be verifiable regarding, at minimum, the certificate issuer, certificate holder, certificate purpose and scope, certificate requisites, and certificate issue date and term.</mark>	This requirement applies only if a digital badge is issued.	**Required:** Written policies & procedures regarding digital badges P&Ps for issuing and verifying a digital badge; evidence that badges issued are verifiable (e.g. through use of a third-party service); sample digital badge	Relevant personnel interviews regarding use and management of digital badges; view badge verification system